



# THE NUGGET

NEWSLETTER FOR THE ARMY PACIFIC REGION  
PACIFIC REGION CIVILIAN PERSONNEL OPERATIONS CENTER,  
FORT RICHARDSON, ALASKA

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## **DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE**

**Jeff Okazaki, Acting Director**

### **ALOHA from Alaska!**

Thanks to all of you, I have the privilege and honor of being the interim Director of the Civilian Personnel Operations Center (CPOC), Pacific for approximately three months while the permanent selection effort for the Director is on-going.

During this period, our team's efforts will be focused toward transitioning the various commands and activities we service through the remainder of FY 02 while positioning ourselves to support our serviced activities in successfully accomplishing their respective personnel missions during FY 03. To achieve this, we will place our primary attention toward but not limit them only to:

- Strategic Missile Defense Command (SMDC) recruitment efforts
- Commercial Activities (CA) Study personnel actions in Alaska and Hawaii
- Transformation of Installation Management (TIM)
- Transition of servicing certain medical (600 series) occupations to the North Central Civilian Personnel Operations Center
- Privatization and Outsourcing actions

We realize that we will not be able to achieve the above stated mission requirements without our serviced activities' support and commitment. To this end, we ask assistance from all involved so we can all enjoy our successful endeavors.

Thank you again for the honor of being able to serve you as the Director, CPOC!

**NOTICE: Time keepers, if you are experiencing problems inputting time and attendance information, one cause may be an interface problem between the automated payroll and civilian personnel systems. To determine if it is an interface problem, call your servicing CPAC representative or local CSR immediately!**



### **THE NATIONAL LEARNING CENTER**

The [Federal CIO Council](#) is collaborating with the [Transportation Virtual University](#) to realize the benefits of integrating e-learning systems across multiple agencies and levels of government. The new National Learning Center (NLC), by combining best-of-breed distance learning products with a very modular learning management system, will complement existing approaches to curriculum, competency management, infrastructure, tracking and reporting.

By unifying a large user base, we expect to achieve impressive economies of scale without sacrificing the uniqueness of individual e-learning programs. Participating organizations will enjoy unlimited use of more than 1,800 courses (with more always under development); access to online instructors; [Competency Management](#) and Learning Objects (systems that correlate unique requirements and general competencies with specific course modules); and use of an extensive online library encompassing IT, business, accounting and professional development.

By maintaining a platform and forum for all to use, we hope to discover and consolidate parallel e-learning projects, minimize duplication of funding and effort in the development of customized courses, and encourage collaboration and resource sharing across boundaries.

**The National Learning Center** is the integration of islands of e-Learning across multiple agencies and levels of government. This evolving program will:

- Facilitate access to thousands of courses
- Support collaboration across boundaries
- Save money through economies of scale
- Consolidate duplication of effort
- Promote best practices

**Free Courses** now available to all federal, state and local government employees:

- Project Management
- Microsoft Office
- Sexual Harassment
- Personal Development

Internet address is: <http://www.nlc.gov/nlc/nlc.html>

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### **THE IMPORTANCE OF HR PLANNING**

The following factors illustrate the importance of Human Resource Planning:

**Cost** -- in the public sector personnel related costs might constitute between 50 and 70 percent or more of an agency's operating budget.

**Public Sector Work is Labor Intensive** -- public sector agencies as part of the nation's service sector are by their nature **labor** intensive rather than **capital** intensive -- in other words large numbers of capable people are physically required for the performance of an agency's activities.

**Complex Undertaking** -- planning decisions affect how the organization recruits, selects, trains, develops and evaluates its staff.

**Performing the Agency's Mission** -- because public organizations are labor intensive, Human Resources Planning must be integrated with the organization's other planning activities in order to provide the necessary resources to fulfill the agency's mission.

**The Process Addresses Unresolved Problems** -- Human Resources Planning must address issues concerning equal representation and access to public sector jobs for minorities, women, the physically challenged and equity in pay levels.

**Turnover** -- Despite the difficulty, generally, in firing an employee covered by civil service protections, a significant amount of "**turnover**" does occur through voluntary separations in addition to disciplinary terminations.

**Human Resources Planning** -- may be defined as the



process of analyzing an organization's human resources needs under changing conditions and developing the activities necessary to satisfy those needs. -- It is an effort to assure that the organization has adequate supplies of the appropriate kinds of human skills necessary to perform organizational activities.

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### CHANGE TO BIWEEKLY LIMITATION ON PREMIUM PAY

Section 1114 of Public Law 107-107 modifies the biweekly limitations on premium pay under 5 U.S.C. 5547. The new premium pay limitations will become effective on the first day of the first pay period beginning on or after April 27, 2002 (effective May 5, 2002). The amendment to 5 U.S.C. 5547(a) provides that a graded employee (including a law enforcement officer), may receive premium pay in a pay period only to the extent that the aggregate of basic pay and premium pay, for the pay period, does not exceed the greater of the biweekly rate for: (1) GS-15, step 10 (including any applicable special salary rate or locality rate of pay); or (2) Level V of the Executive Schedule.

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### WORLDWIDE CHR CONFERENCE – JULY 7-12, 2002

The next Civilian Human Resources (CHR) Worldwide Conference will be held at the Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center in Southbridge, Massachusetts, on July 7-12, 2002. The theme of this conference is "Transforming CHR to Meet the Army's Mission." You may forward suggested topics through major command channels to [Roxann.Dent@us.army.mil](mailto:Roxann.Dent@us.army.mil) no later than Friday, May 31, 2002. For additional information, click on "Register Online for CHR Worldwide Conference Now!" on the Civilian Personnel On Line (CPOL) website at <http://www.cpol.army.mil>. Registration must be accomplished through the website.

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### ISSUES OF MERIT NEWSLETTER

The Office of Policy and Evaluation (OPE) of the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board's (MSPB) *April 2002 Issues of Merit* newsletter is now available on their website at <http://www.mspb.gov/studies/studies/html>.

This Issues of Merit newsletter includes the following:

- Redefining Competition
- Recruiting Needs to Pitch the Positive
- What's Behind the Popularity of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
- Study of Automated Staffing Underway
- Nonprofit Takes Aim at Internal Hiring
- Tools of the Trade: Job Analysis-How To and What's New

If you would like to receive the newsletter, along with press releases of study reports, subscribe at <http://www.mspb.gov/studies/studies.html>. You can also order a hard copy of any of the reports cited in the newsletter by sending a request to [studies@mspb.gov](mailto:studies@mspb.gov).

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### PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT FOR EXECUTIVES

Purpose: To help participants discover better ways of dealing with management and leadership problems for which there are no ready solutions. Participants should possess maturity, creativity, resourcefulness, and a willingness to put forth the extra effort to improve leadership skills.

First priority for PME I and PME II is DA civilians. Ideally, nominees should be managers in the target audience of GS-13/14, WS-16, equivalent NAF personnel or military personnel in the rank of Major or above.

FY02 Course Dates:

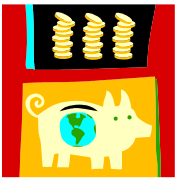
PME I 02-4 Jul 29 – Aug 8

PME I 02-5 Sep 16-26

To reserve a seat or apply on-line at [http://www.amsc.belvoir.army.mil/amsc\\_pme.htm](http://www.amsc.belvoir.army.mil/amsc_pme.htm)

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### **THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP) OPEN SEASON MAY 15 – JULY 31, 2002**

This TSP open season allows eligible employees to enroll or change contribution amounts. However, there is no increase to the current contribution limits of 12 percent for employees covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) and 7 percent for employees covered under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). The elective deferral limit for 2002 remains at \$11,000.

Army civilian employees may make TSP elections via the Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS) on the web at <https://www.abc.army.mil> or via the Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) by calling 1-877-276-9287. Employees should use only one system or the other to transact an election, only one election per open season can be consummated. Employees may establish or change their Personnel Identification Number (PIN) on either system. The Point of Entry password used to access EBIS may also be established or changed by individual employees. Army civilians transacted 54,296 elections via EBIS and IVRS during the last open season.

TSP participants may transact Investment Allocations via the TSP website at [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov) by selecting "Account Access" or calling 1-504-255-8777. PINs must be established or changed with the National Finance Center (NFC) by following directions on this site. Employees are encouraged to use electronic means for fund allocation transactions.

The U.S. Army Publications Agency (USAPA) has begun distribution of promotional pamphlets and posters to publicize this open season. The TSP did not print new stocks of TSP-50's, Investment Allocations, therefore there will not be any distribution of these forms. The TSP forms are stocked at USAPA and may be ordered by calling (314) 263-7305, select 4 for customer service. Callers must provide their USAPA account number when placing an order.

The TSP Board recently announced that the Fall open season dates will change to October 15 through December 31, 2002. Employees will be allowed to increase their contributions during that open season to 13 percent for FERS and 8 percent for CSRS. The elective deferral limit is anticipated to increase in 2003.

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### **NEW TSP SYSTEM TO BE LAUNCHED THIS SEPTEMBER**

The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board has announced that the long-awaited new record keeping system for the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) will be implemented in September 2002. The contracting team, led by Materials, Communication & Computers, Inc. (MATCOM), is on schedule and within budget for the project. The transition to the new record keeping system will be completed on Monday, September 16, 2002. A detailed explanation of the transition schedule and its effect on transactions in progress will be mailed to each TSP participant. In general, the new system will allow for daily valuation of accounts and daily processing of transactions. It will also report account balances in terms of shares as well as dollars; offer a greater number of withdrawal options; and provide on-line service via the Web site for loans and withdrawals. The record keeping system that MATCOM is developing for September implementation was supposed to have been completed two years ago by American Management Systems, Inc. (AMS). On July 17, 2001, the Board announced the termination for default of its contract with AMS and filed suit seeking \$350 million in actual and punitive damages from the contractor. A lower court ruling dismissing the suit on the ground of standing - not on the merits of the Board's claim - is currently on appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. The TSP is a retirement savings plan for federal employees, including members of the uniformed services, that is similar to the 401(k) plans offered by many private sector employers. It was created by the Federal Employees' Retirement System Act of 1986. As of April 30, 2002, TSP fund balances totaled approximately \$102 billion, and retirement savings accounts had been established for nearly 2.9 million federal civilian employees and uniformed services members.

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## CAREER PROGRAM INFORMATION

### *The Resources Module*

[ResMod@asamra.hoffman.army.mil](mailto:ResMod@asamra.hoffman.army.mil)

Phone: (703) 325-1396, Fax: (703) 325-9651/0013, DSN: 221  
Civilian Human Resource Management, CP10;  
Comptroller, CP-11;

Manpower and Force Management, CP-26:

### *The Information Management Plus Module*

[IMod@asamra.hoffman.army.mil](mailto:IMod@asamra.hoffman.army.mil)

Phone: (703) 325-8032, Fax: (703) 325-9651/0013, DSN: 221

Safety and Occupational Health, CP-12;  
Public Affairs and Communications Media, CP-22;  
Housing Management, CP-27;  
Equal Employment Opportunity, CP-28;  
Education Services, CP-31;  
Information Management, CP-34 (Tracks 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, and 08):

### *The Acquisition Module*

[AcqMod@asamra.hoffman.army.mil](mailto:AcqMod@asamra.hoffman.army.mil)

Phone: (703) 325-9574, Fax: (703) 325-9651/0013, DSN: 221

Supply Management, CP-13;  
Contracting and Acquisition, CP-14;  
Material Maintenance Management, CP-17;  
Transportation CP-24;  
Military Personnel, CP-50:

### *The Training Career Program, CP-*

*32:* [alexandt@monroe.army.mil](mailto:alexandt@monroe.army.mil)

Phone: (757) 788-5647, Fax: (757) 788-5635, DSN: 680

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## BENEFICIARY INFORMATION

If an employee does not have a designation of beneficiary form on file, benefits are paid according to the **Order of Precedence**, as follows:

#### Spouse

- If no spouse, to the child or children (in equal shares)
- If no children, to the parents (in equal shares)
- If no parents, then to the executor or administrator



of the estate

- If no executor, then to the next of kin according to state law.

An exception to the Order of Precedence is payment of Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) proceeds to a specific person or persons subject to a court order.

It is not necessary to have a beneficiary form in the OPF if the employee is satisfied with the normal order of precedence. If, however, an employee has completed a designation of beneficiary form in the past, it is his or her responsibility to ensure that the form shows the desired beneficiary. A will or last testament does not control how Federal benefits are paid unless the benefits are paid to the estate.

Below is a complete list of beneficiary forms for Federal benefits:

- SF 1152 – Unpaid compensation, such as unpaid salary, unused annual leave, etc.
- SF 2823 – Life insurance proceeds under FEGLI
- TSP 3 – Thrift Savings Proceeds
- SF 2808 – CSRS Retirement Contributions Lump Sum
- SF 3102 – FERS Retirement Contributions Lump Sum

The local CPAC can assist employees with forms completion and directing the forms to the appropriate office for filing. Employees are encouraged to keep copies of the updated forms for their records.

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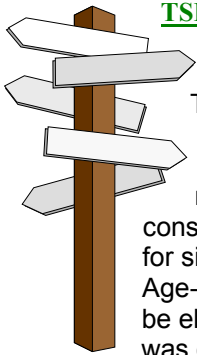
## REVISED LIFE INSURANCE FORM FOR RETIRING EMPLOYEES

OPM has revised the SF 2818, Continuation of Life Insurance Coverage as an Annuitant or Compensation, Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program. Employees completing this form must now choose (and sign for) each type of life insurance coverage they would like to have in retirement or while receiving compensation (Basic, Option A, Option B or Option C). They must choose either "yes" (they want to have the coverage in retirement or while receiving compensation if they are eligible to do so) or "no" (they do not want to have the coverage in retirement



or while receiving compensation). In addition, for Option B and C, they must indicate the number of coverage multiples they want to continue, and whether they want Full Reduction or No Reduction for those multiples. They must also choose the reduction schedule for Basic – either 75%, 50%, or no reduction. The revised SF 2818 is available on the OPM electronic forms page at [http://www.opm.gov/form/pdf\\_fill/SF2818.pdf](http://www.opm.gov/form/pdf_fill/SF2818.pdf).

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### TSP HARDSHIP WITHDRAWAL RULES CHANGES

TSP has changed its rules eliminating the option to transfer financial hardship in-service withdrawals to individual retirement accounts (IRAs). The change is consistent with Internal Revenue Service rules for similar distributions from private sector plans. Age-based, in-service withdrawals continue to be eligible for transfer to an IRA. The change was effective August 20, 2001.

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### ONLINE RETIREE SERVICES

OPM has a retirement annuity Federal income tax withholding calculator on its website. Prospective retirees and those who have already retired can use the calculator to determine the amount of monthly Federal income tax withholding. The calculator is available at [http://apps.opm.gov/tax\\_calc/withhold\\_calc/index.cfm](http://apps.opm.gov/tax_calc/withhold_calc/index.cfm).

Tables used by the calculator reflect the most recent ones. Once employees retire, they receive a claim and Personal Identification Number (PIN) that allows them use of the OPM *Services On-Line* tool to adjust tax withholdings and conduct transactions such as:

- Start, change, or stop Federal and State income tax withholdings;
- Start, change, or stop allotments;
- Change mailing address;
- Designate or change direct deposit account or financial institution;
- Request duplicate tax filing statements (1099R);
- Change PIN; and
- Buy savings bonds.



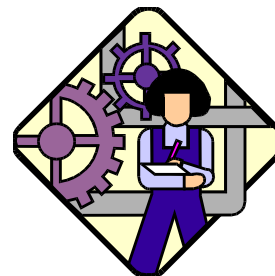
To use *Services On-Line*, retirees should go to <http://www.servicesonline.opm.gov/mainris.htm>.

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### FEHB WAIVER POLICY

OPM updated the waiver policy on the 5-year requirement to continue FEHB into retirement. Under the updated waiver policy, waivers are granted to employees who have been covered under the FEHB Program continuously since October 1, 1996, or the beginning date of an agency's latest statutory buyout authority, whichever is later. For DoD, the beginning date would be October 30, 2000, based on the passage of Public Law (P.L.) 106-398. A memorandum prepared by the support CPAC stating the employee meets the requirements for a pre-approved waiver must be attached to the employees' retirement application. The memorandum must also include the number of the Public Law granting Department of Defense (DoD) Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay (VSIP) authority (currently P.L. 106-398) and the beginning and ending dates of the statutory buyout period (October 30, 2002, through September 30, 2003).

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### WHAT IS AN "INTERDISCIPLINARY POSITION"?

This term is used only in connection with classification of professional positions, i.e., positions having a positive education requirement, such as engineers, attorneys, and social workers. It is most frequently used for positions in mathematical, scientific, or engineering disciplines. An interdisciplinary position is one having duties and responsibilities closely related to more than one professional occupation. Consequently, the position may be filled by individuals qualified in any of the related professional series, and the final classification of the position is dependent on the professional skills of the person selected. For example, it may be appropriate to establish an interdisciplinary position as an Electrical Engineer, GS-850, and an Electronics Engineer, GS-855, since there frequently is a close relationship between the duties performed in these two series.

Individuals with a degree and experience in either field will be referred to the manager for selection. The position will carry the classification series and title of the skill possessed by the individual selected for the position until his/her departure.

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#### **WHAT POSITION SHOULD BE TITLED “SECURITY OFFICER”?**

The title “Security Officer” is reserved for the most senior position in an installation’s security program; there can be only one “Security Officer” for each organizational element. Security Officers develop, install, and manage the security program for an organizational segment, installation, or unit.

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#### **CAN AN EMPLOYEE FILE AN APPEAL ON A POSITION HE/SHE IS NO LONGER ASSIGNED TO?**

No. Employees can appeal the title, series, grade, and pay plan of their current official position ONLY.

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#### **SEPARATION INCENTIVE PAYMENTS BY INSTALLMENT**

The Fiscal Year (FY 2001 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) (Public Law 106-398) amends title 5 United States Code, § 5597, and authorizes the Department of Defense to pay traditional and special workforce restructuring separation incentives (buyouts) in lump sum or installments. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy) issued implementing guidance by memorandum dated January 4, 2002 subject: Authority to Pay Buyouts by Installment.

The Department, in addition to providing the buyouts in lump sum, will allow payment of buyouts in low

installment options. Under the first option, employees may receive their buyout in equal biweekly payments (at a rate selected by the employee) until the full amount of the buyout is paid. The biweekly installment payments may not extend beyond one year from the date of separation. Under the second option, employees will receive their buyout in two payments (one-half of the buyout six months following the separation and the remaining half six months later).

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#### **WHAT IS COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION (DEU)?**

The Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) is a competitive examining process unit used to fill civil service positions with candidates applying from outside the Federal workforce. It is also used to enable employees who do not have civil service status to compete for a permanent appointment and to enable employees with civil service status to compete for other positions. Appointment made through the competitive examining process are subject to civil service laws which ensure recruitment from all segments of society and selection on the basis of the competencies or knowledge, skills and abilities and veterans preference, after fair and open competition.

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#### **WHO CAN APPLY FOR JOB OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS?**

Current permanent Federal civilian employees. - Former civilian employees with reinstatement eligibility. -Current Federal employee in an excepted service position covered by an interchange agreement. - A person eligible for veteran's preference or person separated from the armed forces under honorable conditions after 3 years or more of continuous military service. - A person with non-competitive appointment eligibility. These Job Opportunity Announcements also known as Merit Promotion or Internal Recruitments provide career opportunities to a position in the competitive service without having to compete with members of the general public in an open competitive examination.

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### DE FACTO EMPLOYMENT

De facto employment is the service of an individual who was improperly or never actually appointed when an appointment was intended. De facto employment can be either:

- Individuals serving before the established EOD (Entrance on Duty) date established with the CPOC;
- or
- Individuals are performing service under the assumption they have been legally appointed, but in fact have never been appointed;
- or
- Individuals continue performing service although their temporary or term appointment has expired.

The individual performing the work must be paid for the reasonable value of their services, however he/she is not considered an “employee” for leave purposes. Since the individual is not considered an “employee”, there is no provision to document the fact with an official personnel action.

To receive payment for time worked by a de facto worker, payroll offices require a memorandum specifying entitlement information and certified time and attendance before payroll offices can make payment.

OPM guides and rulings do not allow for the creation of personnel action after-the-fact to change dates of individuals performing de facto employment. Therefore all individuals involved in the recruitment and placement process need to be kept informed of commitments made to individuals for their dates of employment.

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## **FY03 HQDA PROGRAM DATES: APPLICATION AND NOMINATION DEADLINES**

### **BOARD DATES AND CLASS DATES**

<b><u>COURSE</u></b>	<b><u>EAP SUSP</u></b>	<b><u>DA SUSP FROM MACOM/FCR</u></b>	<b><u>BRD DATES</u></b>	<b><u>CLASS DATES</u></b>
SBLM (Class 02-2)	12 Feb 02	19 Feb 02	05-08 Mar 02	20 May 02 - 09 Aug 02
SBLM (Class 02-3)	04 Jun 02	11 Jun 02	25-28 Jun 02	16 Sep 02 - 11 Dec 02
SBLM (Class 03-1)	01 Oct 02	08 Oct 02	15-18 Oct 02	13 Jan - 03 - 04 Apr 03
SBLM (Class 03-2)	14 Feb 03	21 Feb 03	04-07 Mar 03	19 May 03 - 08 Aug 03
SBLM Non-Res 03	04 Jun 02	11 Jun 02	25-28 Jun 02	20 Aug 02 - 30 Jul 03
SBLM (Class 03-3)	02 Jun 03	09 Jun 03	24-27 Jun 03	15 Sep 03 - 10 Dec 03
SBLM (Class 04-1)	Dates Pending			12 Jan 04 - 02 Apr 04

#### **DLAMP**

Class of 2003

#### **SENIOR SERVICE COLLEGES:**

AWC	N/A	31 Dec 02	11-14 Feb 03	21 Jul 03 - 04 Jun 04
AWC-DE (Correspondence)		31 Dec 02	11-14 Feb 03	02 Jul 03 - 03 Jun 05
NWC	N/A	31 Dec 02	11-14 Feb 03	11 Aug 03 - 11 Jun 04
ICAF	N/A	31 Dec 02	11-14 Feb 03	11 Aug 03 - 11 Jun 04

#### **OTHER SCHOOLS/TRAINING:**

<b>Army Congressional Fellowship Program (ACFP)</b>	12 Nov 02	3-5 Dec 02	Aug 03 - Dec 04
<b>DOD Executive Leadership Development Program (DELDP)</b>	29 Mar 02 28 Mar 03	(To OSD) 26 Apr 02 (To OSD) 30 Apr 03	06 Sep 02 - 27 Jun 03 02 Sep 03 - 18 Jun 04
<b>Harvard Univ Prog for Senior Executive Fellows (SEF)</b>	10 May 02 12 Jul 02 03 Jan 03	(Harvard) 15 May 02 (Harvard) 02 Aug 02 (Harvard) 31 Jan 03	10 Jun 02 - 03 Jul 02 28 Oct 02 - 22 Nov 02 30 Mar 03 - 25 Apr 03
<b>National Security Management Course (NSMC)</b>	03 Feb 03	(To NSMC) 10 Feb 03	09 Mar 03 - 18 Apr 03

The automated application system will lock-out applicants at COB (5 p.m. EST) on day of deadline.

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